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Getting the most out
of your gear : The
Ipod Touch.

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Getting the most out of your gear : The Ipod TOUCH.

By knightwise

Geeks, We always seem to be on the lookout for the next new gadget. Scrolling through website reviews, rumor sites or amazon "suggestions" to the next shiny new toy we can purchase and add to our collection. But with technology picking up its already fast pace even more, its harder and harder to keep up. It seems like, even before

you drain the batteries on your new gadget, its successor is already around the corner. Don't get me wrong, progress is a good thing, but with this fast moving evolution of technology, we hardly get the chance to "know" our devices, before they become obsolete. So today I'm not going to talk about one of my newer gizmo's, I'm going

to talk about one I've owned for almost a year now : My IpodiPod Touch.

My 4th generation Ipod Touch is, coincidentally also the fourth Ipod that I own. Having started out with a 15 gigabyte Ipod (2nd Generation), an Ipod Video, a 1st gen Ipod Touch and now this guy, I can say this may be one of the most versatile music players

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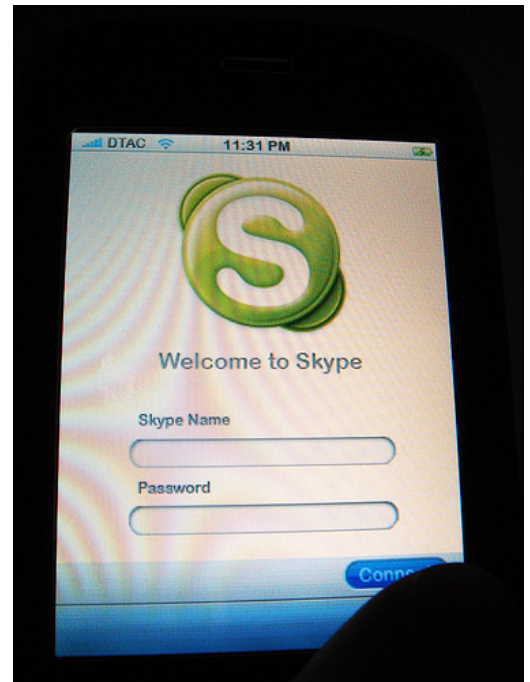
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that I've owned so far. With the addition of functionalities like video and wifi to the 'classic' Ipods, Apple tried somehow to have the iPods "Evolve" from plain music playing devices to video players, game consoles or even video camera"s. Therefore adding loads of functionality to the device, but holding back on the "simcard" addition to differentiate them from the twice as expensive Iphone. I've never gone for a "new" Iphone out of principle because the additional value of being able to make "phone calls" on a device that was JUST like the Ipod touch, only twice as expensive, but used the iPod touch mostly for its primary function : playing music. Until now. My newest Ipod touch (32 gigabyte model), with the addition of a front and rear camera, AND a microphone, together with its wifi and video playing abilities , changed the way how I looked at the device.

One of the most important things in the way you use your devices, is your perception about what their primary function is. If you view your smartphone as a "phone-with-extra's" you'll probably use the device differently then when you look at it as a "Game console that also makes phone calls". Your perception of its primary function will probably dictate how you use the device and how deep you will explore the "other

functions" from day to day. This got me thinking : If I take a look at my Ipod Touch : Do I really see "just" a music player with extra's ? The answer is : No.

My Ipod touch is my "Internet



communicator".

I seldom get any phone calls, to be honest. When my phone actually "rings" my heart skips a beat because its mostly someone who needs to tell me something urgent, or its a some "Homo-proto-digitalis" who is unaware that I conduct most of my communications in a digital way. So back in the days I used to have my laptop open on the table with Skype, Googletalk, Email, Irc and other communications channels open. This was not always practical. Imagine having to "boot up" your doorbell,

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your home phone etc .. So from time to time I forgot to boot up Skype, or closed down IRC because it was distracting me etc. But thanx to my Ipod touch that has changed. Automatically connecting to the home wifi network, the "touch" has



applications like Skype, Facetime, Irc and others running in the background. With the addition of a Mosymount stand I "prop up" the Ipod touch and it becomes ideal for video conversations. Instead of sitting behind my computer to "talk" to people, the Ipod touch is now my "home communicator" for voice-and-videocalls. Its instant on, always online when i'm home and very futuristic when I hook it up to its speaker dock to converse with friends around the world. Additional channels like Twitter, Facebook and Google+ are also quickly monitored via this device. Inputting text can be quite tedious, but like Scotty said : "The right tools for the right job", so for that I use the Ipad or one of my computers. One of the other upsides to "channeling" your communication

channels to the Ipod, is a distraction and clutter free desktop on your computer. No pesky IM applications that bother you. Want peace and quiet ? Just tuck the Ipod away. In effect the Ipod touch functions as an instant-on monitoring device for your communication channels but also offers great functionality as a portable digital communicator for voice and video.

Apps : Skype - Facetime - Tweetdeck - Facebook App - Google+ App - Vtok (Videochatting on google talk) Mail - Mango Light (Free Irc client, there are better ones)

Hardware : [Mosy Mount](#), Logitech Speaker Dock for the Ipod.



My Ipod touch is my mobile camera.

With the addition of the front and rear facing camera and tons of software available the "camera" functionality is no longer an extra gimmick. For "quick and dirty" photo or video blogging around the house (or in a place within reach of Wifi) the Ipod touch is ideal. Wether its taking pictures or shooting little video's the quality of the Ipod Touch is quite good, considering you have enough ambient light to pull it off. With the

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"creative types" lurking on IOS its quite awesome. Not only can you use the Ipod touch for some point and shoot action, you can also use some of the apps like camera+ to edit them before uploading them. With the addition of my Mosymount trypod the Ipod is quite handy for small outdoor video recording too. (As demonstrated in our episode of KWTV where we did a review of 'mounts' for your mobile devices. The Ipod touch makes for a very versatile camera / videocamera that is easy to carry, discrete to use and has a fairly high quality. It can even "stunt double" as an IP security camera when I need it to (all I need is Wifi) or as a quick "lifeblogging" camera with apps like Ustream TV.

Apps : Camera - Camera+ - 8MM - Toonpaint - Ustream Broadcaster - IP Cam - Pixelpipe

My Ipod touch is my entertainment center.

Though small in size, the Ipod is big when it comes to entertaining me. Being the main source of content carrier for my music AND my daily podcasts, it keeps me sane on the long drives in the car. Using Itunes (and the silly cable) I fill up the iPod with some "standard music" I like to listen to, but 99% of the content is

made up out of Podcasts and Audiobooks. Using a special script that I have written up, my Linux server downloads my fresh podcasts on a daily basis. Using the fantastic application called "goodreader" I sync over that folder (over Wifi) to my Ipod.



Because I also forwarded some ports, I can do this from anywhere with a working internet connection. The old podcasts get deleted, the new ones get added, it works perfectly. Goodreader is, without a shadow of a doubt the best and most used app on my Ipod. But it doesn't end there. Sometimes I have audio and video files I would like to "take along" on my Ipod. All I need to do is drop them in a folder on my server, and

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goodreader syncs over THAT folder to, bringing whatever content I wish (And this also works both ways : content CREATED on the iPod touch is sent "UP" to the server too). But aside from that I enjoy using the Ipod as a "personal trainer" when I need to find out how you hang a frame on a wall. (Youtube is full of both entertaining and instructional video's) I don't put video's 'on' my iPod using Itunes so i hardly use the stock "video" app, but DO use AIRPLAYER, a great DLNA client that connects to my Amahi DLNA server. That way I can stream audio and video content stored on my server. And if I ever run



of local content I can just use apps like TED , or the revision3 app. Even the Sticher app comes in handy when I want to listen to streaming podcast radio.

Apps : Music player - Goodreader - Airplayer - Revision3 app - Stictcher app - TED app - Youtube app.

My Ipod touch is ... My Audio recorder

Although you might think we should be coming to the end of this series , the fun goes on ! The Ipod also makes for a great audio recorder. The built-in microphone is of a very high quality and is perfect for those quick snippet recordings (I love to collect audio from preforming street artists) but with the addition of the apple earbuds (or skullcandy ones, whichever you prefer) you can use it to do podcast recording. (I have hooked up a boom mike to it , and its just perfect for podcasting in the car). The stock "audio recording" application records in high quality, but you are not able to get the files OFF without hooking it up to Itunes (and you all know how I feel about that).

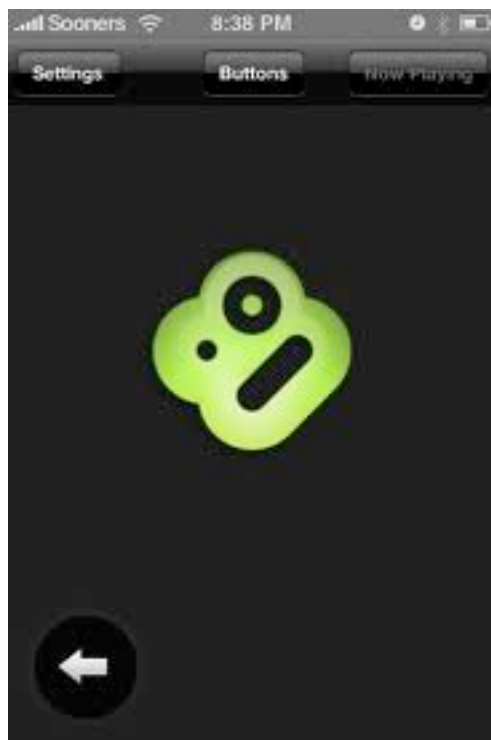
Apps : Audio Recorder.

My Ipod touch is ... My Remote control.

What we tend to forget is that the Ipod also makes a great "remote" for controlling devices and services around the house. One of my favorite uses is the "boxee app" where I can use the iPod touch as a remote for the boxee pc hooked up to our Tv. Its

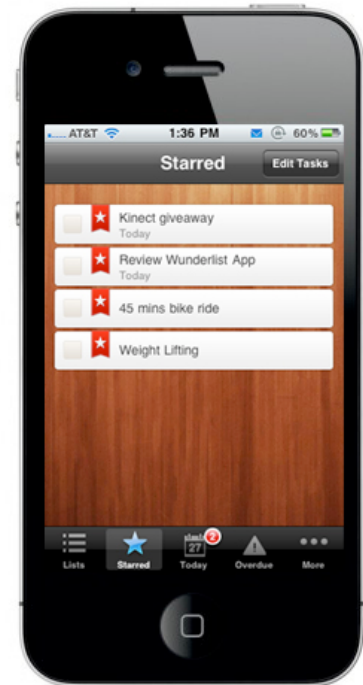
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lightning fast, and very versatile. The iTunes Remote app makes it nice to control the music playback on our Imacs without having to go indoors when we want to chill to some tunes on our porch. And you know that the ability to connect (via the command line) to my linux servers from just about anywhere is mandatory for me. So ISSH does that pretty well. There might be something to say about the "small keyboard" but we manage to



survive. In case of rare emergencies even "full screen desktop control" can be acquired using the teamviewer app.

Apps : Boxee remote app - iTunes remote app - ISSH - Teamviewer.



My Ipod touch is ... My PDA.

And although I use my phone for most of the following applications, I have made them available on the Ipod too. Email Calendar and Contacts are of course mandatory. But to avoid an "over-cluttering" of my communications (getting nagged by emails on every device) I've setup a special email account on Google for my Ipod Touch and only sync my personal CALENDAR to the device. Not my emails. That way I can quickly glance at what I have planned, but also shoot notes - files - whatever to my Ipod using its special (secret) email account. Always a nice way to

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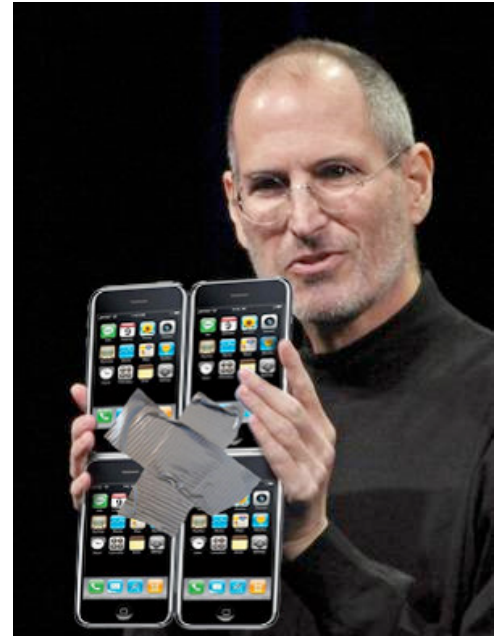
filter out information overload. What is of course mandatory for all my portable devices is their "interlinking" with Evernote. That way voice memo's, pictures and notes are easily synchronized across my devices. the gTasks application is a nice app for keeping track of my Todo Items and syncing them "in the cloud" to my Ipad. I don't use the iPod extensively as a PDA but as a "backup" when my smartphone runs out of power its just perfect.

Apps - Gtasks - Evernote - Mail - Calendar - Wunderlist

And my Ipad touch is even more.

Forget not that WHEN my iPod is hooked up to wifi, its a powerful little tool to access a lot of web based information. The device might be a little too small for "browsing" the interweb, but for some quick googling 'in a pinch' its pretty ok. However, using some clever apps like the Wikipedia application, the IMDB application and some others, its like having a "portable tricorder" in your hand that helps you to look stuff up. The standard Google search application, Google earth, goggles and even places help me find the stuff I'm looking for in a pinch. Even easier (and more discrete) then flipping open a laptop (or the Ipad for that matter) the iPod makes a great 'information

tether' to the web. Mostly the device just lies around on our coffee table as we are watching tv, making it a great



tool to settle any movie arguments or quickly pull down some obscure fact to satisfy our knowledge hungry brain.

So what about ... Games and stuff.

To be perfectly honest, I'm not really a gaming person. Although I love things like Angry birds and stuff, I can seldom find the time (nor the patience) to really "get into a game". And for that the Ipad is not to blame, for even our Xbox 360 doesn't see a lot of "Fraggin Knightwise" these days. And with plenty of content and connectivity to keep me entertained, I'll pass up on "cows versus aliens" for now.

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Conclusion.

The Ipod touch has the wrong name. Its that simple. "Ipod". It reminds us of a "music player" that outlines its primary function "playing music", putting all the other possibilities of the device second. And in fact, that is hardly fair. When you turn around and look at the Ipod touch as a Wifi-only-mini-tablet, it becomes much more powerful. For a fraction of the price of an Ipad (and an Iphone) you get the rich eco-sphere of IOS applications AND the "quality of build" that Apple products are known for. Even the first iPod i've ever owned is still in service today. With great battery life, a good screen, a pretty fast processor, a good front and back camera AND the ability to connect to the internets, the Ipod touch is so much much more than its forefathers. So we owe it to this little square device to see it as more than an "mp3 player with some extras" and appreciate it for the underpriced overpowered mini tablet it actually is. To be honest , I would not be surprised to see a transformer logo on the bottom of the device, because it is indeed , so much more than meets the eye.

I hope you enjoyed my deep-geek-dive into the functionalities my little

"mp3 player" has to offer. With the right software and some creative thinking, you can find many many more ways to have this little piece of technology work for you. Turning an mp3 player into a mobile web conferencing tool does not require you to be a coder .. just .. think outside the box and make tech ...

work for you..



Feedback.

So lets tap that hive mind of

yours .. tell us : What do YOU use your iPod touch for ? What apps do you recommend and what clever tricks have you found to have the iPod work for you ?

You can send your comments to the original post of this article on Knightwise.Com by using the QR link below.

